

February 2012

# Come Grow With Us!

Dear Oak Tree Friends,

The old “contemporary” chorus “Seek Ye First” paraphrases Matthew 6:31— “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you, allelu, alleluia!” The song then goes on to talk about knocking and the door will be opened unto you – from Matthew 7– and people start to think it is all about praying and praying until God gives you what you want. That is not what Matthew 6 is about. It isn’t about seeking what you want or think you deserve, it isn’t about badgering God until you get your heart’s desire. It is about seeking the Kingdom, seeking God’s way, God’s righteousness, in short seeking God.

When was the last time that you sought God, really looked for God, and looked to put God first in your life? In what ways have you sought the kingdom of God? We search for many things in life, but not always the right things and often we put God in second, third, or even last place in our lives. When we put God in first place in our lives instead, everything else in life has a way of falling into place. The same goes for our congregation. We, as a congregation, should also be seeking God and seeking to put God first. We should be seeking God’s call, God’s leading, God’s will for us as a congregation– and when we do that we will find ourselves in the “place just right”, we will find ourselves exactly where God wants us to be! And isn’t that exactly where a church should be?

This journey that we are beginning this year, the Jeremiah Journey leads us in a process of seeking God, and seeking God’s will for us as a congregation. You’ll be hearing more about this journey soon!

Peace and joy,

*Rev. Jill*

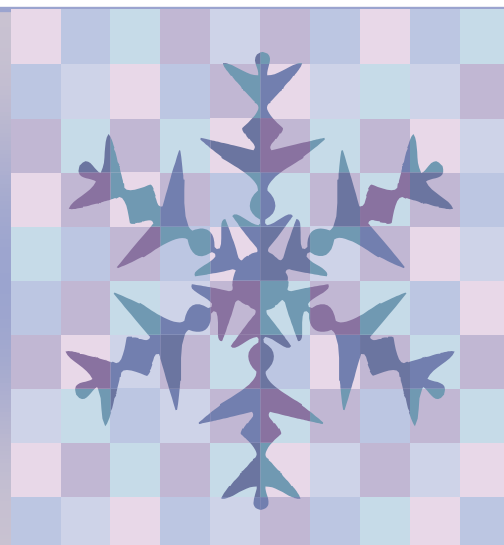
“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?”  
Matthew 6: 25-26

## OTPC - February at a glance

- 5—“Bad Girls” Bible Study
- 9—Brighton Gardens 2 PM
- 12—Deacons Meeting 11:15 AM
- 13—Session meeting 7 PM
- 14—Oak Tree @ FISH Clothing Room
- 19—Joint Worship and International Dinner
- 20—Soul Feast at home of Laura Reeves
- 22—Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 PM
- 23—Knit One, Pray Too 7 PM

**Choir** — Wednesdays at 7:45 PM

**Bible Study** — Wednesdays at 6:30 PM  
Thursdays at 10 AM



# Lenten Opportunities

## Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is the start of the Lenten season in the church. This year it falls on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. You are invited to begin Lent at our Community Ash Wednesday Communion Service. Join us at 7:30 PM at the First Presbyterian Church

of Metuchen for this special service of repentance and the imposition of ashes.



## Lenten Breakfast

Our annual Lenten Communion Breakfast will be held on Sunday, February 26th at 9:30 AM. Join us as we gather around tables in the sanctuary to break bread together and to celebrate Communion for the start of Lent.

## God's House

### The Yellow Brick Sidewalk

A few blocks in our new sidewalk have been purchased! But we still need a lot more! Estimates to replace the sidewalk came in at approximately \$160 per square and we need a lot of squares! Won't you consider buying one square of our much-needed walkway or perhaps joining together with another person or two to buy a square together?



### Let there Be Light!

Our lighting fixtures in the classrooms all need to be replaced. Thanks to Rich Listash, the fixtures were replaced in Rev. Jill's office and the main Salta classroom. Fixtures run about \$45 each and there are 8 per classroom. If you would like to adopt a classroom or help with the installation, see Karen Wallner.



### THANK YOU!

Thank you to Jeff Reeves for his many years as the facilities manager, the person who took care of our building and grounds. We would not have room in this newsletter to list all that Jeff has done for Oak Tree Church, but we do say a great big THANK YOU, Jeff, for all of your faithful service.



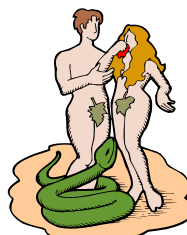
## NURTURING THE SPIRIT

### BIBLE STUDIES

Because we believe that we never stop learning and growing in faith, we offer two Bible Study opportunities at Oak Tree. There will be an evening Study on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and a morning Study on Thursdays at 10 a.m. Both classes will be studying the Gospel of Matthew, which is our lectionary gospel for the fall. Everyone is welcome to join us for these group discussions of God's word. No former experience or knowledge is needed, just a willing spirit and an inquiring mind!

### BAD GIRLS OR—AMAZING WOMEN?

A Bible Study that takes a look at some of the "bad girls" of the Bible will be held the first Sunday of every month immediately following worship. Led by Madelynne Lindsey this study will consider some of the amazing women of the scriptures and the bad rap that some of them got! Join us on February 5th in the Conference Room.

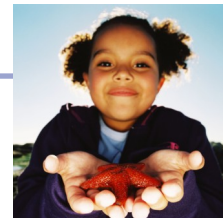


Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:28-32

## Thanks for Serving!

This coming Sunday we will ordain and install our new officers for the class of 2014. Thank you to Gary Shelhimer, Holly Weakley, and Lisa Simon for agreeing to answer God's call to serve as Elders and to Hazel Shelhimer, Debbie Kratz, and Virginia Ferrante for answering the call to serve as Deacons. Over the next few weeks we will be reorganizing the session and the Ministry Groups of the church. Won't you consider serving on one of our three Groups. Instead of committees we have Ministry Groups and each group takes care of one or more

areas in the life and ministry of our church. Prayerfully consider joining the work of one of these groups: Spiritual Nurture is the group that takes care of Music and Worship, Christian Education, Bible Study, and other Small Group ministry in the church. The Administrative Ministry group is in charge of the Building and Grounds, Personnel, and Stewardship. The Fellowship and Outreach Ministry Group is in charge of Outreach programs, Membership, Fellowship, Mission, and Publicity.



## OAK TREE CARES

### FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED

Unemployment continues to grow, people all around us are living on the edge, facing foreclosure and wondering how to feed their families. Next time you go to the grocery store, why not pick up some extra food to help refill our food pantry and the emergency pantry at Amandla Crossing. We are well supplied on many items right now, but can still use cereal, peanut butter, and soup.. As Easter approaches we would also like to collect some frozen turkeys and canned ham. Donations can be put in the bin in the back of the sanctuary, or in the freezer in the kitchen.

### FISH UPDATE

Oak Tree Friends and neighbors donated more than 150 bags of clothing to FISH in 2010! That's more than 2000 pounds of clothing! The FISH Clothing Room is a busy place these days. With our current economy, there is a great need for gently used clothing. Donations of new underwear and socks are also appreciated. We will be going to FISH on Tuesday, February 14th, from 8:30 a.m. till noon.



## Winter Safety

Please stay safe this winter! We seldom cancel worship here at Oak Tree, but if you feel unsafe on the road, please stay home! In the event that we do cancel worship, we will do our best to let every one know. We will send out an email and enact the phone chain. We have hired someone to clear the parking lot and walk ways. It would be great to have someone to come early every winter Sunday to check the walks and put down salt before anyone arrives at the church. If you are willing to do that job, see Rev. Jill. right away.

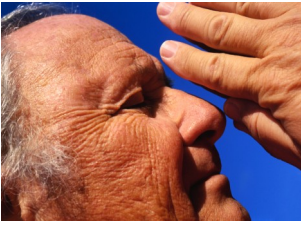


## PCUSA.ORG

Have you looked at our denominations website lately? [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org) is worth a look every once in a while. It's the place to find out what's going on and what we are doing in the connectional church. When you go on it next time, be sure to look at some of the *Growing Christ's Church Deep and Wide* videos. They tell wonderful stories of congregational change and renewal.



# Stewardship Thoughts



Thank you to everyone who made a pledge of support to the ministry of Oak Tree Church for 2012! We know what a difficult economy it is and are grateful for your on-

going support. The Session would like to have a balanced budget this coming year, but we need your help to make that happen. We worked to reduce our budget for 2012 as much as possible and have increased our revenue from building use quite bit.

The third part of our plan involves some fund raising efforts. If you have ideas or can help with this, please speak with Rev. Jill. We are hoping to have another Trash and Treasure Sale this spring, so start collected your gently used items that we can sell. Other fund raising

ideas are also being considered. We thank you for your continued support of the ministry of Oak Tree Church and look forward to your help in the coming year. If you have not already done so please pay your \$37 per capita for 012. This is what our congregation pays annually to support the work of the Presbytery and General Assembly of the Presbyte-

## IS GOD CALLING YOU?

**Is God calling you to serve the church as a representative to Presbytery meetings or to be on one of the committees of the Presbytery? Serving on a committee of our regional judicatory can be very rewarding. We are a democratic church, run by the people and that means you! See Rev. Jill if you think you are being call to serve or want to know more about the various committees and responsibilities!**



# Multi-Cultural Worship and International Dinner

Join us on Sunday, February 19th for our second joint worship with our Lord of Hope Korean friends and our Love of Jesus Indian friends at 10 AM and bring a dish from your ethnicity to contribute towards our International Dinner which will follow worship. Hope to see you there!



## The Greatest Commandment

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12: 30-31



## Come on the Journey

The Jeremiah Journey begins soon! This will be the beginning of a 3-year journey of exploration where we, as a congregation, listen for what God would have us do. It is a journey of discovery and discernment, of listening to the word of God in a new way that just might lead our congregation in a new and exciting direction. Our leadership team for the journey is Ann Marie Williams, Madelynne Lindsey, and Terry Gleason.

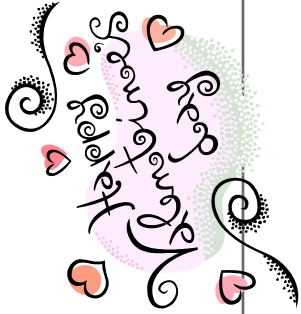


## Make a Joyful Noise!

You are invited to sing with the choir! Join us and our new director Lisa Simon on Wednesdays at 7:45 p.m. for practice or come on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m.. If you have ever thought about singing with the choir, this would be a good time to join. No experience necessary — every-one is welcome!



# February 2012



Sun                      Mon                      Tue                      Wed                      Thu                      Fri                      Sat

			1	2	3	4
			6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	10:00 Bible Study	10:00 Bible Study	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 "Bad Girls" Bible Study			6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	10:00 Bible Study 2:00 Brighton Gardens		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8:00 Men's Breakfast 10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 Deacons	7:00 Session	14 Valentine's Day 8:00 FISH clothing room	6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	10:00 Bible Study		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10:00 Joint Worship & International Dinner	7:30 SoulFeast at Laura & Jeff Reeves	President's Day	Ash Wednesday 7:30 Community Ash Wednesday Service at First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen	10:00 Bible Study 7:00 Knit One, Pray Too		
26	27	28	29			
10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 Ministry Groups			6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir			



**OAK TREE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

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**Staff:**

**Pastor: Rev. Jill Kitsko**

**Administrator: Mary Ellen Martin**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
OAKTREECHURCH.ORG

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FIRST CLASS MAIL — Address correction requested



## Worship at Oak Tree

Some folks like to prepare for worship by reading the upcoming passages and reflecting on them. Here are the lectionary passages for the Sundays of December & January:

**Feb 5:** Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:26-39.

**Feb 12:** 2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45.

**Feb 19:** 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9.

**Feb 26:** Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15.

### Worship Assistants

Thank you to everyone who helps with ushering and coffee hour at Oak Tree! We appreciate all you do. We have placed the list of Usher duties on the inside door of the usher's closet. Please review the list when you arrive early on your Sunday and make certain that everything is in order for the service. After the service make sure the sanctuary is ready for the next service. Helpers for the months of December & January include:

**Feb 5: Communion Ushers:** Madelynne Lindsey, Terry Landrigan, Nancy Sittinger; **Communion Set-Up:** Nandai Sookhoo, Eileen Ruf; **Acolyte:** Alexa D'Alessandro; **Sunday School:** Florence Chukwuneke; **Nursery:** Chris Alonso; **Coffee:** Laura & Jeff Reeves.

**Feb 12: Ushers:** Andy Haug, Eleanor Ternyik, Debbie Kratz; **Acolyte:** Dan Kitsko; **Sunday School:** Nancy Sittinger; **Nursery:** Susan Sendelsky **Coffee:** Ann Marie Williams, Holly Weakley, Steve Kitsko.

**Feb 19: Ushers:** Dan Kitsko, Len Mesonas, Jeff Reeves; **Acolyte:** Kenneth Echie; **Sunday School:** Ginny Ferrante; **Nursery:** Steve Kitsko; **Coffee:** Deacons Nandai Sookhoo, Hazel Shelhimer.

**Feb 26: Ushers:** Florence & Terry Chukwuneke, Joe Ott; **Acolyte:** Terry Chukwuneke; **Nursery:** Eleanor Ternyik; **Coffee:** Rose McKennon, June Carroll.

